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The 'Silver Ring' Contraceptive

To the Editor, *Eugenics Review*

SIR,—Your note on Gräfenberg's silver ring as a contraceptive agent (Vol. 21, No. 4, page 280), calls for comment.

Whether the ring does or does not prevent extra-uterine pregnancy is still uncertain, but there is no reason at all to suppose that extra-uterine pregnancy in a "ringed" woman would be any more serious than in a woman without a ring. I do not know what ground you have for your assertion that the presence of the ring might "lead to very serious complications."

You suggest that funds should be raised to enable a party of gynaecologists to visit Dr. Gräfenberg's Clinic for a thorough investigation. I have visited Dr. Gräfenberg on two occasions, but have yet to learn that he has a Clinic. So far as I am aware the only place he could give demonstrations would be in his own consulting-room, and indeed he was most kind in putting all his knowledge at my disposal. If English gynaecologists wish to investigate the method, they need not go to Germany. Profiting by Dr. Gräfenberg's instruc-

tion, I have for some time been using his method of contraception, not only in my private practice but also at the Cromer Welfare, Sunlight, and Birth Control Centre, 59, Cromer Street, London, W.C.1, and have now collected 150 cases. At the centre we fit the ring in several women every Wednesday afternoon, and any medical man or woman wishing to attend can make arrangements with the Secretary (Telephone: Terminus 6130).

Retschminsky has investigated the hydrogen-ion concentration in the uterus of many patients, both before and after the fitting of a ring. He finds that after the wearing of a ring the pH becomes higher (i.e. more alkaline) and, in his opinion, it is this which prevents fertilization.

My 150 cases are too few and too recent for me yet to issue any definite opinion, but so far my experience with Gräfenberg's ring has been most satisfactory; and, as far as I can judge at present, it seems to be the most nearly perfect method of contraception at our disposal. Of course it must not be used in unsuitable cases, and it requires a certain amount of skill in the doctor who employs it.

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